Amnesty dangerous, civil society group warns GMA

Story below, Col. 1

SGV chief is new trade secretary

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appointed Cesar A.V. Purisima, chair and managing partner of the accounting firm SGV & Co., as the new secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, replacing Manuel A. Roxas II who resigned last week to run for a senatorial

SGV CHIEF/A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph | Saturday, December 20, 2003 | 32 pages | vol. 19 | no. 12 | website: www.inq7.net

Bro. Eddie sure to run



[illegible caption] Ping Lacson [illegible] Christmas party of the [illegible] Estrada.

Evangelist says only God can stop him

By Blanche Rivera and Norman Bordadora

ONLY God can change his mind.

Evangelist Eddie Villanueva, the spiritual director of the Jesus Is Lord movement, yesterday said he was 99 percent sure of running for president next year.

A popular preacher better known as Brother Eddie, Villanueva is running with the presumed support of JIL, which claims a membership of [illegible] million, mostly in the Philippines.

"I've reached a point after four months of praying, consulting, agonizing. There's an urgency to lead Filipinos in establishing a righteous leadership because the country has reached a point of irreversible degradation," he said, referring to the political movement he launched earlier this week.

"I'll offer peace and a healing presidency," he told the Inquirer.

Villanueva said there was still a one-percent chance that God would change the JIL leader's plans, citing the example of Abraham, whom God stopped from sacrificing his own son Isaac at the last minute.

In an interview on the ABS-

BRO. EDDIE/A6

Jacko charged, faces long prison sentence

SANTA MARIA, California—"King of Pop" Michael Jackson was Thursday charged with sexually molesting a young boy after plying him with alcohol, allegations that could land him a hefty prison sentence.

But Jackson's lawyer hit back at the charges, saying the "King of Pop" was "unequivocally and absolutely" innocent and that he would fight the charges motivated by "money and revenge" with "every fiber of his soul."

Prosecutors near Jackson's fabled Neverland Ranch in California filed nine criminal charges against the beleaguered superstar and included a "special allegation" of "substantial sexual conduct" with a child under 14.

"There are several special allegations ... which, if found true,

JACKO/A15



A THRILLER it is not for the "King of Pop" against whom nine criminal charges have been filed.

Alliance means Danding's for GMA, says son

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A son of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. yesterday upped the ante in the high-stakes game of politics, saying his father, the founder of the Nationalist People's Coalition, may be said to back President Macapagal-Arroyo in the May 10 elections.

Twenty-five congressmen and 13 governors belonging to the NPC coalesced with the Lakas-CMD on

ALLIANCE/A6



GMA uses hardsell on soldiers

By TJ Burgonio

AND don't you forget it.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday reminded the military of the largesse it was receiving under her administration, leading some soldiers to conclude that she was securing their support in next year's elections.

"To your mother, my children, I hope you don't forget that I raised your salary," the President told the troops in a speech at the Armed Forces' 68th anniversary rites in Camp Aguinaldo.

She said that as Commander in Chief, she always considered the welfare of the officers and men as one of

GMA/A6



LOOKING after her "children," President Macapagal graces the 68th AFP anniversary on Friday, here with AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya shortly before she goes on a pass and review at the parade grounds in Camp Aguinaldo.

VP hopefuls gird for free-for-all

By Michael Lim Ubac and Carlito Pablo

THE POLITICAL camps of prospective vice presidential candidates were as busy as Santa's elves yesterday with two floating trial balloons and one 'flirting' at a long-awaited decision.

A key supporter of Sen. Robert Barbers of Lakas-CMD, who wants to be President Macapagal-Arroyo's running mate, claimed that Raul Roco's campaign group was making "overtures" to Barbers. Roco was "willing to take in" Barbers as running mate, Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano said.

Liberal Party president Rep. Florencio Abad (Batanes) said his party would likely support a presidential candidate who would choose its newest member, Senate President and now LP chair Franklin Drilon, as vice presidential candidate.

"We would like to join a presidential candidate who is interested in getting Frank Drilon," Abad said.

VP HOPEFULS/A6

Stranded OFWs told to give up claims in Saudi

By Martin Marfil

THE 16 OVERSEAS Filipino workers stranded in Saudi Arabia who are asking the Philippine government to help in their repatriation may have to give up their claims with their employers if they wish to go home immediately.

The Department of Labor and Employment yesterday ruled out any immediate repatriation for the 16 because their pending cases in the oil-rich kingdom would be adversely affected if they left that country.

The workers have been holding a hunger strike at the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh to pressure the

STRANDED/A6

Amnesty plan very dangerous, GMA warned

By Armand N. Nocum and Juliet Labog-Javellana

MISGIVINGS continued to be aired yesterday over President Macapagal-Arroyo's general amnesty plan, with civil society leaders expressing apprehension over her supposed closeness with Marcos cronies including businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

"Amnesty is very dangerous; it should be very calibrated. You may give the wrong message to wrongdoers," Teresita Baltazar of the civil society group Bantayog ng Pilipino told the Inquirer in a phone interview. She's also a government official, being a member of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

Baltazar said the President owed her supporters and the Filipino people in general an explanation of how she intended to implement her plan to grant amnesty not only to Marcos-era abusers and communist insurgents but also to "those involved in past political conflicts."

"People will continue to do wrong, thinking that they can get away with it [because of the] amnesty offer from the government," Baltazar said. She said she was relaying the view of many civil society leaders who attended Thursday's executive committee meeting of the Bantayog ng Pilipino, a network of about 80 nongovernment organizations that played an active role in ousting then President Joseph Estrada.

Among the groups represented at the meeting were the Concerned Women of the Philippines, Federation of Free Workers, Kaibigan ng Urban Poor, and Citizens' Action Against Crime.

Baltazar said that while Ramos

AMNESTY/A15

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FrontPage

Public assured RP ready vs SARS

MILF rebels free 4 captured soldiers

400 arrested in latest PNP drive vs jueteng

GMA opens NLEX sections; toll road now 60% complete

FPJ to announce 'co-star' next week, says Angara

MOVIE actor Fernando Poe Jr. will announce his choice of a running mate next week, or before he files his certificate of candidacy for president on Dec. 29, Sen. Edgardo Angara said yesterday.

"I cannot tell you the exact date but I'm positive that within a week the team will be announced," Angara told reporters at a news conference.

He said Poe will make the announcement, noting that the popular actor himself would make the choice of his running mate.

"It's his (Poe's) choice and the only participation of the political parties would be to suggest names to him but the final choice would be his," said Angara.

The newly formed opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) led by Angara has proclaimed Poe as its standard-bearer for the May 2004 elections but the latter has yet to formally accept the offer.

Among those who have made themselves available to be Poe's running mate are Senators Loren Legarda, Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and Aquilino Pimentel Jr., and former Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

At the same news conference, Angara described Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who is contesting the opposition's nomination with Poe, as a "desperate" man for alleging that he (Angara) was a "mole" of Malacañang.

Lacson had said that Angara, president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, was really a Palace insider who connived to bring Poe to the opposition and divide it.

"If I were indeed working for Malacañang, would it not be logical (for me to) support the candidate who has the greatest showing in the surveys, so that (President Macapagal) would surely beat him?" Angara said. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Clear Air Act on track–Perez

By Abigail L. Ho

FILIPINOS do not have to wait another five years to have a taste of cleaner air.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez yesterday said there were no plans to defer the implementation of the Clean Air Act (CAA), particularly the provision on lower sulfur content in automotive diesel fuel.

He said the Department of Energy had, in fact, been pushing for the CAA's early implementation by calling for the possible application of uniform standards of low sulfur content for both automotive and industrial diesel fuel.

The CAA requires all firms to reduce the sulfur content of automotive diesel by 75 percent from 0.2 percent to 0.05 percent effective Jan. 1, 2004.

For industrial diesel fuel used by power plants, shipping lines and fishing fleets, however, the CAA did not specify a date for compliance by fuel providers.

"The implementation of the CAA with regard to the fuel specifications has been in full swing and in fact most of the target deadlines were even accelerated to underscore the government's fight for a cleaner air," he said in a statement yesterday.

He said CAA compliance for automotive diesel fuel was even accelerated to November this year in Metro Manila.

For industrial fuel, the CAA did not give a specific deadline as, Perez said, the 1999 law recognized that compliance with emission standards for stationary sources could only be achieved through appropriate configuration of the fuel users' respective facilities, machines and equipment.

But still, the CAA mandated the energy department to constantly review fuel standards so that air quality could improve.

With the law imposing a Jan. 1, 2004 deadline on compliance with the mandated sulfur content for automotive diesel fuel, some sectors likewise sought the adoption of a similar provision for industrial diesel.

"Several consultations were held to hear the positions of different sectors whether or not to impose uniform standards for automotive and industrial fuel. The government believes that access to a cleaner air is one of the basic rights but it should be a shared responsibility," Perez said.

He noted that such a move could result in oil price hikes.

Following the consultations, the DOE, through the Technical Committee on Petroleum and Additives, would be proposing to the Bureau of Product Standards new specifications for industrial diesel.

From the current 0.2 percent sulfur content, industrial diesel should only have 0.05 percent of sulfur effective Jan. 1, 2005.

Germans to stay Robot extradition bid if he goes on trial in RP



AFP





Suspected communist rebels bomb Globe cell site in Cavite

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Seven men of men bombed and strafed the Globe Telecom cell site in Carmona, Cavite Thursday night, disrupting mobile phone service in that province and Batangas.

Cavite police director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales said the gunmen, who identified themselves as members of the communist New People's Army (NPA), overpowered security guard Albert Ocampo at around 11 p.m. before detonating several homemade bombs and shooting up telecommunications equipment.

Ocampo told police the suspects were furious over Globe's refusal to pay "revolutionary taxes" to the NPA.

Globe officials, however, told police the cell site's operations were not entirely hampered. They refused to reveal the extent of the damage to the property.

Rosales said investigators found empty shells for M-14 rifles and traces of gasoline and ammonium nitrate from the improvised bombs.

He said he did not believe the gunmen were NPA rebels, noting that there had never been reports of a guerrilla presence in the area.

"The NPA has never established operations in Carmona. They also never use M-14 rifles in their operations. They use M-16s and pistols," Rosales told the Inquirer.

Rosales, former police director of NPA-infested Quezon province, said authorities were looking at the possibility residents of nearby barangays were responsible for the attack.

He said ACO Construction Corp., the contractor that built the cell site, drew the ire of the residents after it failed to fulfill its promise of hiring them in the construction of the site.

Rosales said police had recorded an incident where local residents stoned ACO employees and fired at its engineers after failing to get jobs. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Designate firecracker zones—Lina

INTERIOR Secretary Jose Lina Jr. yesterday asked local government executives to designate a firecracker and pyrotechnic zone where revelers could safely explode firecrackers on Christmas and New Year's eves.

Lina said the establishment of so-called "firecracker and pyrotechnic zones" in every province, city, municipality and barangay could go a long way in making the New Year's festivities safer for the people.

He urged local government executives to convene their peace and order councils and draw up their public safety plans for the holidays.

Lina also said that the public should do its part in the campaign.

"The public should not buy the banned items [explosive devices] that illegally made their way into the market," Lina said. *Nelson S. Flores*

People Events & Products

The Big Idea(s) in the newspaper business





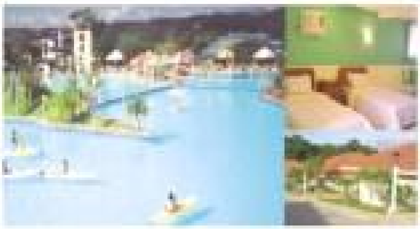
PETPlans Success Business System launched











CLUB MANILA EAST VILLA IS NOW OPEN

UPMas homecoming

Product Files

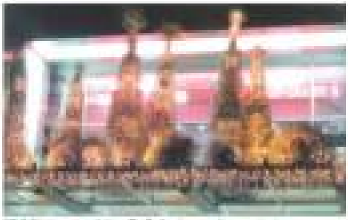
Superior writing tool in spirited TV ad



Symphonies of the Season at The Podium



MITSUBISHI APPOINTS BBDO GUERRERO ORTEGA FOR SALES DRIVE







FREEMASONS CONDUCT MEDICAL MISSION

BPI among 'best in governance'



METROBANK AND VISA OFFER VISA PLUS ATM SERVICE



ZEST-O JUICE INVADES THE LRT



BAHAGHARI GIVES DONATION



EO-EXECUTIVE OPTICAL BAGS AWARD



DIWA GOES TO GENERAL SANTOS AND ZAMBOANGA FOR SEMINAR



RAMOS' 45TH 'SAPPHIRE' WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

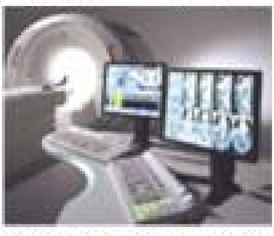
Bits Clips

Mr. Suave night at Bigger Bang Las Piñas

UPMG to meet

Product Files

Imaging product of the year



Alliance means Danding's for GMA—son

2nd biggest bloc

With Rio Diaz

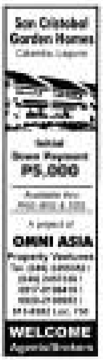
GMA uses hardsell ...

Fusion

Campaign pitch

Praise

Ceasefire



SGV chief is new trade secretary

Also a bachelor

CPA top placer



VP hopefuls gird for free-for-all

Impatient

Between De Castro, Barbers

Villar sees Roco win in 4-way contest

By Michael Lim Ubac

Major consideration

Senate party

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Ruben

Courts deal blows to Bush war on terror

WASHINGTON—US courts on Thursday dealt a double blow to US President George W. Bush's prosecution of the war on terror, with rulings that his administration was abusing the rights of detainees.

One court said inmates at the US detention camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, should be allowed access to lawyers and the court system. A second ruled that an American, Jose Padilla, suspected of involvement in an al-Qaida plot, could not be held as an enemy combatant.

In San Francisco, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals made a 2-1 decision harshly critical of the detention of the 660 prisoners at Guantanamo without charge or the protection of the Geneva Convention.

Most were captured in Afghanistan when the United States toppled the Taliban regime and routed the al-Qaida network responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001.

"Even in times of national emergency ... it is the obligation of the Judicial Branch to ensure the preservation of our constitutional values and to prevent the executive branch from running roughshod over the rights of citizens and aliens alike," the court said.

The ruling was issued in a case filed by Belaid Gherebi on behalf of his brother, Faren, a Libyan who is being held at Guantanamo.

The court said it could not accept that the US administration possessed the "unchecked authority" to detain anyone under US jurisdiction and to control "without permitting such prisoners recourse of any kind to any judicial forum, or even access to counsel."

Such a position was "so extreme" that it raised the "gravest concerns" under both US and international law.

The court's findings are unlikely to have any short-term impact, as the US Supreme Court is expected to rule on the whole issue of the Guantanamo detainees next year.

Prior to Thursday's decision, US authorities had taken a small step by naming a military defense counsel for one of six detainees at Guantanamo who has been singled out by Bush for possible trial by a military commission.

The other bad news for the government came when a federal appeals court in New York ruled that Bush did not have the right to detain an American citizen seized on US soil, as an "enemy combatant" and ordered his release within 30 days.

Jose Padilla—suspected of plotting with al-Qaida a radioactive "dirty bomb" attack on US soil—has been held without charge at a brig in South Carolina since June last year.

"Presidential authority does not exist in a vacuum," the court said in another 2-1 majority decision that stressed Bush would require specific Congressional authorization to detain Padilla in such a fashion.

"The president's inherent constitutional powers do not extend to the detention as an enemy combatant of an American citizen seized within the country away from a zone of combat," it said.

The White House described the ruling as "troubling and flawed," while the Justice Department said it would seek a stay and appeal the decision.

"In times of war, the president must have the authority to act when an individual associated with our nation's enemies enters our country to endanger American lives," said department spokesperson Mark Corallo. *AFP*



CHRISTMAS TRUCE

A handout picture shows German and British troops meeting in no-man's land during the Christmas Truce of 1914. The first German book on the legendary event is based on accounts from soldiers on both sides who staged impromptu armistices along parts of the western front of World War One, playing football, swapping food and burying their dead together. *AFP*

WorldBriefs

Blast in Iraq Shiite office

BAGHDAD—At least one person was killed Friday when a blast ripped through a religious school affiliated to Iraq's main Shiite political party in Baghdad, a day after a senior US officer warned that insurgent attacks against Iraqi targets were on the rise. [illegible] *AFP*

7 cleared of SARS in HK

HONG KONG—Seven elderly patients from a Hong Kong hospital have been cleared of SARS, but health officials are still investigating [illegible] *AFP*

Snoring linked to heart failure

MELBOURNE, Australia—People who snore are more likely to suffer heart failure, Australian researchers said Friday. [illegible] *AFP*

Afghan women seek equal rights

KABUL—Women at a convention on Afghanistan's constitution have called for the document to enshrine equal rights [illegible] *AFP*

Israel threatens unilateral steps

JERUSALEM, Israel—Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon gave notice to the Palestinians Thursday that he would abandon attempts to reach a peace deal and implement his own unilateral measures if they did not meet their commitments to the Mideast roadmap within months. [illegible] *AFP*

Japan to adopt US missile defense

TOKYO—Japan said Friday it had decided to adopt ballistic missile defense (BMD) systems to protect itself from a barrage [illegible] *AFP*

Musharraf may drop Kashmir demand

ISLAMABAD — President Pervez Musharraf is ready to offer alternatives to Pakistan's life-long demand for a plebiscite in disputed Kashmir, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid said Friday.

"We are dropping the call for plebiscite," Rashid said.

"We're saying that we can think of certain other things, we have some alternative proposals. We're prepared to offer some alternatives."

While it is not clear that Musharraf has committed to abandoning demands for a referendum, the offer to negotiate on the key platform of Musharraf's Kashmir policy could mark a dramatic turning point in relations between Pakistan and India, just weeks ahead of Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Islamabad for the Jan. 4-6 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit.

The minister declined to outline the "alternative proposals," saying only that Musharraf would raise them with Indian leaders when "serious talks" are held.

"He has them in his mind, when there's serious talks he will talk," Rashid said.

Pakistan has demanded Kashmiris be allowed to choose between rule by Pakistan or India since 1948, a year after Pakistan was carved out of India in the partition of the subcontinent.

The demand for a plebiscite has been backed by the United Nations Security Council in several resolutions since 1948. *AFP*

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang
Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

FLU SEASON AGAIN

Kids, elderly, pregnant women at risk



IT often strikes whenever the weather gets colder, like now. Even its name hints at this pattern—coined in the 18th century from the Italian phrase *influenza di freddo*, which means "influence of the cold."

Fujian flu

Vaccine

Telling a cold from flu

New drug offers hope when chemotherapy fails

Major breakthrough

Quick-acting

Testimonial

Hurting and healing, naturally

DISCOVER



Maria Santos Rallon



Opioids in the body

Puffer fish

Several medications

Profitable market

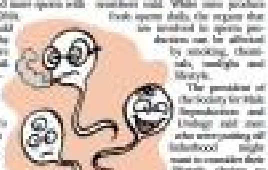
Christmas puzzles

EUREKA!



Queena N. Lee-Chua

Old sperm bad news for babies



Reuters

When extended survival means prolonged agony

Medical Files

Holistic approach

Only evolving in RP

Alarming studies

OVERWEIGHT?

Solution for overeating

Word of Mouth

Sandy Daza

Escape

Two glasses

Other benefits

Ask the Dentist

Brushing during parties

New skin care products help skin regain balance



P.H.A.P. DONATION

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION



Changing fortunes

EDITORIAL

[illegible]

Saddam falls

SEPARATE OPINION

Raquel A. Cruz

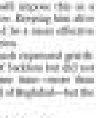


[illegible]

My hero

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod



[illegible]

Motivating overseas Pinoys

POLITICAL TIDBITS



Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

Street talk

YOUNG BLOOD

Poverty, the Manila Cathedral and Christmas

COMMENTARY

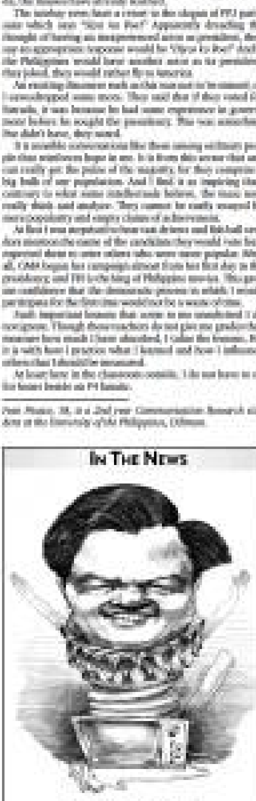
Denis Murphy

Pampanga once upon a time

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY



IN THE NEWS



Sen. Noli de Castro

'Da King' to 'Da Fool'

LETTERS

'Leave us alone'

Getting the facts straight

Better perspective on Meralco rate hikes

A child in Culion needs help

Across the NATION

Chokepoint traps 3 kidnap suspects



4 people die, 26,000 flee as floods sweep Caraga

Chemical-laced 'adobo' kills teacher

Man turns up to own up slay of Ecleo wife

Gov to tap retired docs

INQUIRER Visayas
Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Eldrdlyn L. Benedicto

Danao: Cebu's 'Little Las Vegas'



THE MAIN STREET of Purok Dinagsa that won as the best well-lit area in Danao City

By Jolene B. Balarbar
Cebu City

SITUATED in the southern part of Cebu, the city of Danao is gaining popularity this holiday season, not for its widely known "paltik" (homemade) guns but because of its indigenous and gigantic Christmas decors and glittering neighborhoods.

A simple and quiet city during the day, Danao is transformed at night, earning for itself the moniker the "Little Las Vegas" of Cebu. Local and foreign visitors flock to the city at night to take a glimpse and experience the festive celebration.

Houses along the major streets that are ablaze with red, yellow, blue and green lines, from 6 in the evening until dawn are the major attractions.

Giant stars have been placed along the streets, adding to the festive look. Along the national highway, electric posts are adorned with handcrafted decorations made of indigenous materials.

Cebu Rep. Ace Durano, whose family has dominated Danao politics for generations, said it was the first time that the city initiated such an elaborate and expensive activity.

He said all the people actively participated in what is now known as "Pasko sa Danao."

Unity, cooperation

"I am very proud of it. It seems like a little Las Vegas because of the lights. All the people of Danao have organized their unity and cooperation to make this activity very successful. It's one way of giving importance to the birth of Jesus Christ," Durano said.

Nelia Enriquez, 63, a resident for more than 40 years, said the people were grateful to their officials for initiating the activity.

She said their street, which belongs to Purok Dinagsa, won as the best well-lit area in Danao.

"We have been cooperating because the idea is unique and we are so proud that we are chosen as the best-lit area. We all did this because we love our place and we want to show to the world that we can be very creative," Enriquez said.

Samuel Vasquez, 42, won the biggest star made up of used colored cellophane with copper grass. The star is the main attraction of Purok Dinagsa. It is 12-feet long and 14-feet wide, and is placed on the roof of the Vasquez family's two-story house.

Aside from its glittering, glitzy neighborhood, the city boasts of its life-size display of mangers or "belen." Eighteen belen are scattered all over the major streets.

Spectators come not only to view the mangers but they took photographs and videos as well.

Mary Jane Bito, 33, who grew up in Danao, also felt like a tourist and looked forward to a walk in the streets at night and gawk at the lights, decorations and belen, together with her three children.

Bito said she was amazed by the unity of the residents, who were able to come up with a very spectacular and unique way of celebrating Christmas.

She said her children were so awed at the colorful and creative replicas of Christ's Nativity that they would pass them by during their nightly strolls.

"This is the first time that we encountered such a meaningful way of celebrating the birth of our Lord. Every community here is actively involved. My children can really relate and they better understand the meaning of Christmas now, especially love, unity and cooperation that are being manifested through the belen," Bito said.

Ricardo Hermano, 31, a trisikad (passenger bicycle) driver, appreciated the influx of visitors. He said his income had doubled since the nights started being visited and travelers from nearby towns.

"Everything is so colorful here. During evenings, I go out because there are a lot of activities, a lot of people and passengers. I am happier now because I can earn from P100 to P200 a night," Hermano said.

Source of pride

Councilor Alice Durano said the "Pasko sa Danao" project was conceptualized as early as October by the city government.

She said all the 42 barangays participated in the holiday activities, such as the lantern and belen making, street lighting and caroling contests.

The project cost more than P200,000, she said, since the city government had to give a P5,000 subsidy to each barangay aside from the cash prizes ranging from P2,000 to P30,000.

"This is the first time Danao City hosted such a big affair in coordination with the committee on tourism. We are so proud because we have proven that we can all unite for one noble purpose. We are proud, too, because our efforts are being appreciated not only by our constituents but other visitors who came here to witness our Pasko sa Danao," the official said.

She said the belen are made of indigenous materials, such as egg shells, coconut husks, sugar grass, twigs and leaves from plants, as well as recycled materials, such as old clothing, used styrofoam, and used bottle caps.

"We are so happy with the results because our people have creatively come up with all these using indigenous and recyclable materials. These are original ideas and we are so proud because the people have been shown support for this project," she added.



THE LIFE-SIZED replica of the nativity scene in Bethlehem, one of the many dotting the city sidewalks, has been attracting tourists to Danao City in northern Cebu, 33 km from Cebu City

Bro. Eddie sure to run, says only God can stop him

Not wise

TV station

Not a politician

Amnesty plan ...

Political bickering

Cojuangco

Standards

Draft amnesty bill

Act of grace

General principles

METRO

Police to set up checkpoints outside Metro

Precinct chief guns down guard in Manila

MetroBriefs

4 killed in rampage

4 cops accused of child abuse

2 men rapped for drugs

In Manila, beggars make the rounds of courtrooms



IT IS the season for giving (and asking) so these children make the rounds of the Manila City Hall wishing everybody a Merry Christmas in exchange for loose change.

Benhur gives way as mayor, guns for Congress



Jacko charged, faces long prison sentence

Rectal penetration, etc.

'Shakedown'

Family support

Muslim convert?

Stranded OFWs told to give up claims in Saudi

Repatriation

Private shelters

Motorists not so merry over Xmas parties

Urban poor head ambushed



ARTIST'S sketch of the killers of a Taiwanese tourist

DoT gets ₱251M for walls

Taiwanese tourist killed by gang preying on aliens

Roco and the wife-battery bill

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo





Proud President gives ₱12M to medalists



Welcoat seeks vengeful win vs Fash Liquid

REVENGE is in Welcoat's mind when it takes on Fash Liquid Detergent today in the PBL Platinum Cup at the San Juan gym.

SPORTSWATCH

Maco booters gain Coke finals

Andrada Cup listing starts

Unique Aquathlon challenge up

Futsal gains big following in RP

HK duo top winners in Taal Regatta

Buenas Dias derby at Roligon today





Coach Banal leaves his beloved Eagles

Shell's Dela Cruz is Sportsman of the Year



SPORTS



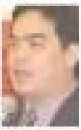
Proud President gives ₱12M to Vietnam Games medalists

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called Filipino medal winners in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games world-class and gifted them with an incentive totaling P12 million.

PBA acts to rescind NBN deal

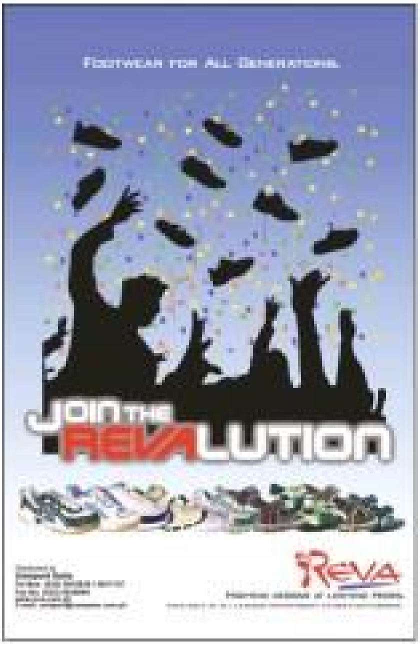
Pro league may put up own TV production

AFTER failing to get a square deal from NBN-4, its broadcast partner, the Philippine Basketball Association is now thinking of putting up a television production of its own.



CABALLAN

SPORTS TV





DESPITE A 76
Que survives Japan cut

ANGELO Que stumbled with two double-bogeys in a 4-over-par 76 yesterday that pulled him down to 29th place after the second round of the Asia-Japan Okinawa Open that was suspended by darkness at the Southern Links Golf Club in Okinawa, Japan.

[illegible]

Family sweep by Superals in Young Guns at Legends



[illegible]

Bata protege faces Gabica in 9-Ball challenge today

[illegible]



All eyes on Gorres in Subic fight fiesta

[illegible]



Spring-San Pablo 7 Lakers vow better future stint



[illegible]

Empire King out to stamp his class anew

[illegible]

Joson top RP finisher in Asian F-3

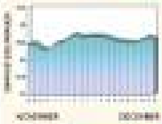
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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Connie S. Maniñgat

Survey: RP consumers becoming pessimistic

CURRENCIES

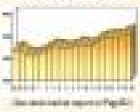


STOCK MARKET

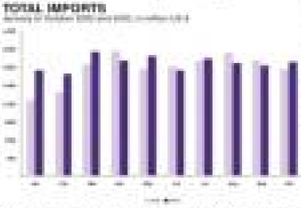
Telecom stocks lift market



By Doris C. Dumlao



Imports reverse decline, jumped 7% in October



Fees lift

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

[illegible]

PCCI chief sees bright garments prospects

By [illegible]

[illegible]

MVP seen giving up PLDT post in '04

By Abigail L. Ho

[illegible]

SPI, British firm fail to reach buyout deal

By Doris C. Dumlao

[illegible]

Survey: RP consumers . . .

[illegible]

Disclosures

[illegible]

Content provider allays rate hike fears

[illegible]

Abigail L. Ho



BUSINESS

Political woes may drag peso to 56 to $1 next year

SSS collection up 15%

Jollibee voted No. 1 in RP

4th quarter growth seen hitting 3.8-4%



Saturday Super

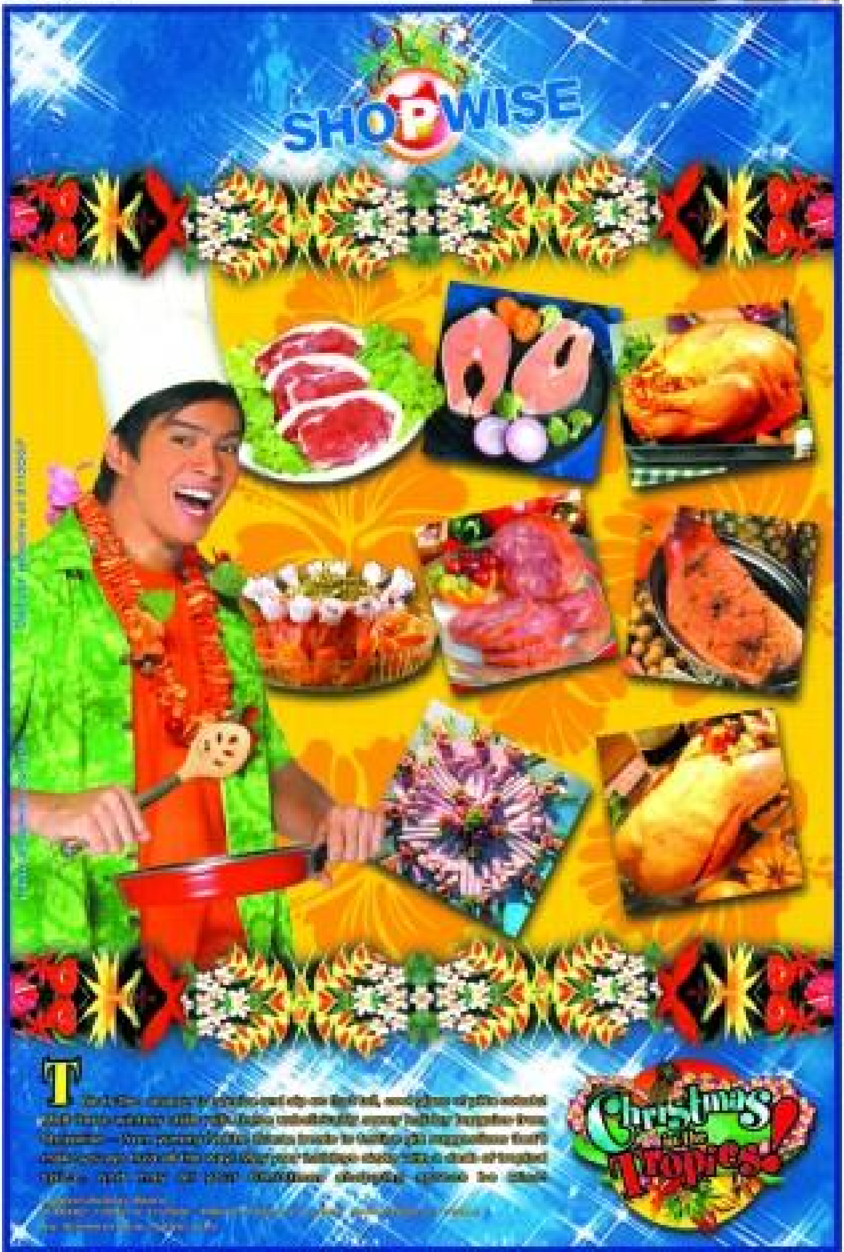
Music, MTV. . .

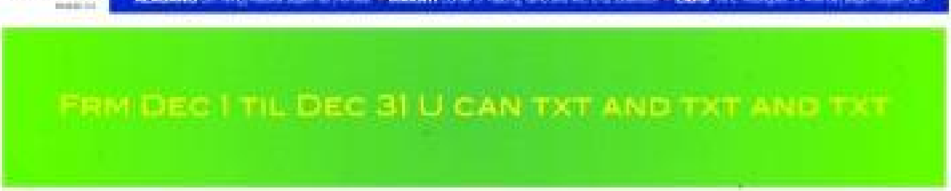
...and love for all mankind

Tim Yap










MTV BABES. Tina Hiro and Chris Lopez at Dish


GLITTER GALS. Anne Miranda and Sigrid Villareal


ADDICTED TO LOVE. Paolo Rillo and Emma Policarpio


SWATCH BUDDIES. Sarah Meier, back from NYC with her buddy Charina


ON-CAM, OFF-CAM. Jean Rodriguez and Francis Andaya


BE SEEN 24/7. Bea Constantino and JB Isaac

Music, MTV . . .

...and love for all mankind

From page C1

FBA. Then again, eye candy is eye candy. I'm not complaining.

Michelle Branch and Dido

This early, our favorite music station announced that Dido, one of the nominees for favorite Female Category, will be performing at the awards proper to be held in Singapore. Michelle Branch, another nominee, dropped by Hong Kong to show her support at the event's press conference.

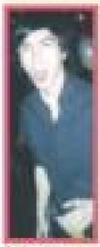
I've been fortunate to have attended the awards faithfully since its birth in Asia a couple of years back, and I can say that every year, it gets better. Who can forget Mandy Moore's duet with Regine Velasquez? Or our local VJ Belinda Panelo interviewing Jessica [illegible]? And Sarah Meier with Pink at the after-party?

Donatella Versace smiled past me when she accepted her "Style Award" (she looked like a sunburnt Barbie—no, seriously), and I was right beside Robbie Williams in the toilet when we answered nature's call (hey, no George Michael jokes, please). And I even met F4—all of them, together—but nobody knew them at the time, so I just politely shook their hands, practiced my Mandarin for five minutes, and headed towards [illegible] direction.

I remember our very own Gary Valenciano getting star-struck over Zhang Ziyi, how the Singaporean band [illegible], and how all the [illegible] pop stars looked like they were my siblings.

But more than the music marketing and celebrity sighting, what makes the MTV Asia Awards really special is its ability to make true [illegible] binding us with our common love for music.

That alone is enough to make me say it again: "I love MTV!"


DAD [illegible]


YES YES SHOWDOWN. Chito Miranda and Vinci Montaner rock the mike during the MTV Awards voting party

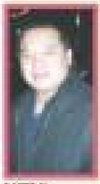

BUBBLEBOY GETS LUCKY. Alex Rosas, Ipe Cruz and Reagan Zubiri under the mistletoe


STYLISH GENES. Audrey Carpio and Ines Cabarrus


SWITCHING SALIVA. Best buddies Kate Valentino and Miguel Rosales, who's responsible for the night's decor


KISSING ANGELS. [illegible]


HEAVENLY FEEL. Tina Hiro, [illegible] and Chris Lopez


RATED Ron


I WANT YOUR BLOOD. Paolo Parsons with hot date Mylene Dizon


SUPER MARIO AND HIS BROTHER. Bonnie Kitarava and Mario Luis read to it

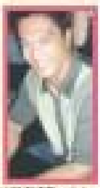

PINK FROM. Why don't you give two on Chi for me dear


PAROCHIAL MUSIC MAKERS. Kinoi, Bossi and Gabby of Parokya ni Edgar, nominees for MTV Asia Awards Favorite Artist Philippines


STUD FARM. Ricardo Cortés and Matt Lim


RIVERMAN Roving


PINK PAIR. Bajo Lauren and Pinky Nanon


MYLENE Dizon's bro Anthony


MODEL COUPLE. Michelle and Troy chilling out


STYLISTICS. Ericson and Gabby—fresh, now salon


CHIKKA ADDICTS. Dennis Mendiola and Louie Ang


BOY TOYS. Anton del Rosario and Enzo Santos


GOLD STANDARD. My goo main Luis


A DOSE OF C. Charlie Boerhes


AVANT GUARDIAN. Verbrink Aurori

We are family!





People ask why Filipino films keep going back to the domestic drama. This is because we look for stories that tell us how we are

Cultural

Powerful

Straight . . .

Text message



COFFEE, tea, or me? Coffee please





Brave new brides

This movie heralds the renaissance of the Pinoy sex comedy, with make-out scenes that, aside from being vital to the story, will make you choke on your drink mid-laugh

Straight 'promdi' heart

SWAK! by Lex

...my native land. If I don't stand up for it, who will?

Provincial wisdom

Well, are you?

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz



While most people look upon Christmas as a bloodbath for one's bank account, I pivot myself towards the more introspective—and sometimes outrageous—aspects of the season



MICHAEL Jackson is my friend!

Human Swiss knife

A challenge for Hallmark

Viva lost wages

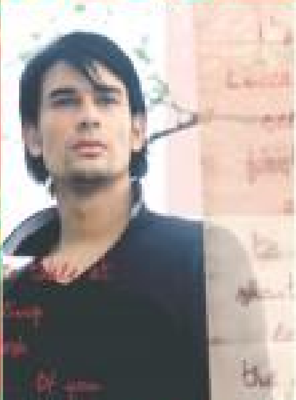


For the lonely, for those in love

Text by [illegible]
Photos by [illegible]
Makeup by [illegible]
Styling by [illegible]
Fashion by [illegible]

> *The angels, half so happy in heaven,*
> *Went envying her and me*
> *—Annabelle Lee, Edgar Allan Poe*









LOVE is a union of people oft separated by circumstance but joined by mutual experience and emotion.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Love is a union.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Love.

E-mail the author at [illegible]